

KING COUNTY (WA) DISTRICT COURT OPERATIONAL/FACILITY MASTER PLAN

PROJECT PLAN TO ACCOMPLISH SCOPE OF WORK (As Amended July 19, 2004)

I. Introduction

In King County, Washington, the District Court is a trial court of limited jurisdiction. By ordinance, the County approved the District Court Mission and Vision Statements as shown in Figure 1.

**FIGURE 1.
KING COUNTY DISTRICT COURT MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS**

King County District Court Mission Statement
<p>The King County District Court will serve the public by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing an accessible forum for the fair, efficient, and understandable resolution of civil and criminal cases; and• Maintaining an atmosphere of respect for the dignity of individuals.
King County District Court Vision Statement
<p>The King County District Court will be the preferred forum in King County for the resolution of all cases of limited jurisdiction. To provide the highest quality of justice, the King County District Court will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Protect the public safety by providing resources to hold convicted offenders accountable for their actions;• Work as an independent branch of government with other units of government to achieve common goals;• Make effective use of taxpayers' resources;• Continuously ascertain and respond to the needs and expectations of all court users;• Provide a uniform and predictable level of service;• Provide efficient, convenient, and safe facilities;• Seek out and use modern technology and equipment;• Serve as the coordinator for all the services necessary for an effective judicial system;• Maintain a diverse and professional workforce;• Maintain sentencing options and sentence offenders appropriately;• Educate the justice system community, legislative, and executive agencies, and public about the courts; and• Respect the diversity of the community.

King County is currently undertaking the development of an Operational Master Plan and Facilities Master Plan (OMP/FMP) for the District Court that which will comply with the District Court mission and vision in a climate of declining financial resources within the County. Under Contract No. T02082T (June 9, 2004), the County has engaged the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) to evaluate and offer recommendations on methods and costs to provide court services for an “Operational Master Plan” (OMP) and a “Facilities Master Plan” (FMP) for the King County District Court. The NCSC task is to identify system efficiencies, develop recommendations for service delivery to meet the court's mission in a climate of declining resources and to conduct an analysis of (see King County Code 4.04.020 LL):

- Projected workload,
- Resources,
- Performance measures,
- Strengths and weaknesses (not a requirement in code),
- Operating alternatives,
- Estimated costs of alternatives (including life cycle of capital costs),
- Implementation schedules.

The OMP must also address how the organization would respond in the future to changed conditions.

The NCSC analysis must include (a) the separation of services between those that are mandated* versus those not mandated, and (b) analytical forecasting and cost modeling to evaluate alternatives in operations in conformity with (a) above.

As part of the contract (see Table 1 on the following page), King County has identified expected “deliverables,” and it has given a timeline for the provision of those deliverables. Due three weeks after the signing of the contract, this project plan is the first such “deliverable.”

* NCSC recognizes that what is “mandated” is a complex matter, since it is defined not only by statute but also by constitutional provisions, case law, and other considerations.

**TABLE 1.
PRODUCT DELIVERABLES AND TIMELINE:**

Deliverable	Due Date to Project Management	Percent of Contract Amount to be Paid upon Deliverable received in accordance with Contract Section III.
Project Plan to accomplish "Scope of Work"* – including attendance at Steering Committee meetings	Three weeks from contract signing	5% = \$6,500
Framework* – as defined in "Scope of Work," Section C. 1, in Contract Exhibit A.	June 30, 2004	5% = \$6,500
Baseline and Forecasted Caseload* – as defined in "Scope of Work," Section C. 2, in Contract Exhibit A.	July 31, 2004	5% = \$6,500
Evaluation/Options* – as defined in "Scope of Work," Sections C.3 and Section D, in Contract Exhibit A.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact to other King County agencies (D. 1) • Mandated vs. Non-mandated (D.2) • Operating Alternatives (D.3) • Impact to Staffing (D.4) • Facility location/space needs (D.5) 	October 15, 2004	30% = \$39,000
Final Recommendations* – as defined in "Scope of Work," Section C. 4, in Contract Exhibit A.	November 15, 2004	30% = 39,000
Implementation Plan* – as defined in "Scope of Work," Section C. 5, in Contract Exhibit A.	December 31, 2004	25% = 32,500

* In addition, attendance is required at monthly Steering Committee meetings to provide facilitation and presentation of materials.

II. NCSC Project Management and Budget

The director of the NCSC project team for this effort will be David C. Steelman, a New Hampshire resident and a principal court management consultant with NCSC. Mr. Steelman will be responsible to oversee the entire effort by the project team; and he will be answerable to the County, the Steering Committee, and the Court for the successful accomplishment of NCSC project tasks. In addition to attending the June meeting of the Steering Committee for this project, he will personally attend the November and December meetings of the Steering Committee to present the NCSC project team's final recommendations and proposed implementation plan. At least one other project team member will attend each of the other monthly meetings of the Steering Committee in person; and if possible Mr. Steelman will participate in those meetings by telephone. In all likelihood, NCSC project team members Mr. Donald Lachman and Ms. Colleen Laing will attend all of the meetings of the Steering Committee in person. While specific details have not yet been made final, it is also possible that Mr. Alex Aikman will be able to attend one or more meetings of the Steering Committee between July and October 2004. When possible, the NCSC project team will try to schedule visits to Seattle by other project team members so that they will coincide with scheduled meetings of the Steering Committee.

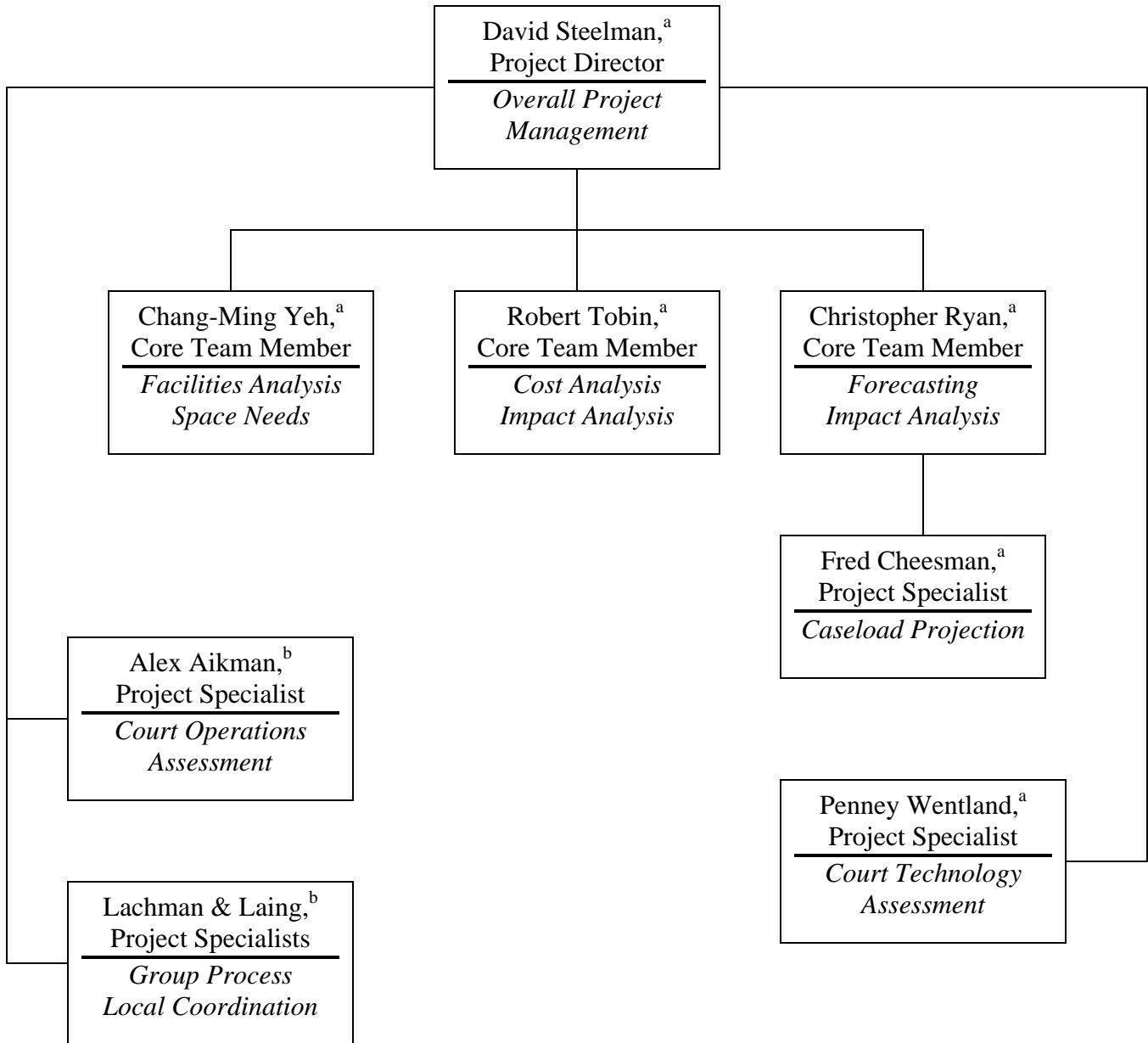
For this project, NCSC leaders have internally approved a total operating budget of \$160,608. Of this total, the contract calls for King County to pay \$130,000. The remaining \$30,608 in the total project budget will be contributed by NCSC from its own financial resources, as technical assistance to King County.

III. NCSC Project Team

From the prospective team members offered in the NCSC response to King County's "Request for Qualifications," NCSC has designated a specific project team that has the requisite knowledge, skills and experience to meet contract requirements in an effective and efficient manner. The organization of the NCSC project team is shown below in Figure 2. As Figure 2 indicates, the NCSC project team members working with the project director will consist of (a) core team members and (b) project specialists (both NCSC staff and independent contractors).

There will be three core team members. Robert W. Tobin is a principal court management consultant and an expert on court finances who works in NCSC's Washington, DC, office. He will give particular attention to cost analysis. Chang-Ming Yeh is a principal management consultant in NCSC's Denver office, and he is a court facilities expert who will address the facilities issues in this effort. Christopher T. Ryan – a senior court management consultant in NCSC's Denver office with expertise in workload measurement for judges and court staff members – will address current and projected workloads and personnel needs in the Court. These three core project team members will play a lead role with Mr. Steelman in the assessment of options, mandated versus non-mandated services, the development of final recommendations, and the preparation of a suggested implementation plan.

FIGURE 2.
ORGANIZATION OF NCSC PROJECT TEAM



a. NCSC full-time employee.

b. Independent contractor.

Project specialists will also have a critical part in the activities of the NCSC project team. Of high importance will be the efforts of independent consultant Alexander B. Aikman of Redding, California, who will rely on his experience as a former California trial court administrator and NCSC senior staff attorney to conduct an assessment of court operations, including interactions with other agencies, mandated versus non-mandated services, and operating alternatives. Other specialists under contract to NCSC would be Donald A. Lachman and Colleen B. Laing of Lachman & Laing in Seattle, who will play a key role in group processes in the project (both as potential facilitators for decision-making and in the conduct of focus group or other group information-gathering activities) and will provide a local presence in King County for the project team.

Other project specialists in the NCSC project team will be full-time NCSC staff members. Ms. Penelope Wentland is a senior court management consultant with NCSC's Denver office, who has worked recently with on technology issues with the King County Superior Court. She will assess current technology and technology prospects in the District Court. The final specialist in the project team is Fred L. Cheesman, a senior court research associate in the Research Division at NCSC headquarters in Williamsburg, Virginia. A published expert on the subject of forecasting, he will assist Mr. Ryan with the completion of caseload projections for the Court.

IV. Project Steering Committee, Project Leadership, King County Project Management, and Core Project Staff

The District Court OMP/FMP will be guided by a steering committee with representatives from King County District Court, King County Council, King County Office of the Executive, and Contract Cities. The Steering Committee will be co-chaired by a collaborative effort of the King County District Court Presiding Judge, Corinna Harn, and the Deputy Chief of Staff from the King County Office of the Executive, Maura Brueger.

The County Contract Authority for the King County District Court (KCDC) OMP/FMP is the Office of Management and Budget. The primary staff for the OMP/FMP will be Toni Rezab, Senior Criminal Justice Policy Analyst with the Office of Management and Budget and Tricia Crozier, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) for the District Court (hereafter referred to as primary staff). All communications should include primary staff. As to facilities issues, primary staff will also include Kathy Brown, Director of King County Facilities. All deliverables due from NCSC will be delivered concurrently to primary staff for circulation to the Steering Committee. It will also be the role of the primary staff to gather information requested by NSCS and to facilitate and staff the County staff working groups in the review of analysis, evaluations, and recommendations.

In addition to the OMP/FMP primary staff there are several "Core Project Groups" that will be working on this effort either as working groups or as individuals providing topic specific information. This is not a complete list, as issues arise that

require the expertise of another agency or person, they will be included on the specific issue or topic. The working groups will be under extremely tight deadlines to complete their work, therefore, where possible, advance standing meetings will be set up or correspondence via e-mail, if necessary.

For Caseload Forecasting:

Tricia Crozier, KCDC

Toni Rezab, Office of Management and Budget

Clif Curry, Council Staff

Polly St. John, Council Staff

Beth Goldberg and/or Jill Fairlee, Office of Management and Budget

Chandler Felt, King County Demographer

Donna Brunner, Budget and New Development Director, KCDC

Dr. Andrew Glenn, Research and Statistics, Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)

Superior Court Representative – to be determined

Contract City Representative – to be determined

For Operational Alternative Impacts

King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office Representative – to be determined

King County Office of Public Defense Representative – to be determined

Contract City Representative – to be determined

Toni Rezab, Office of Management and Budget

Tricia Crozier, KCDC

Cathy Grindle, King County District Court Technology Director

Donna Brunner, King County District Court Budget/New Development Director

King County District Court Judicial Representative

King County District Court Labor Union Representative

King County Superior Court Representative

King County Jail – Representative

King County Jail Alternatives - Representative

King County Sheriff – Representative

Tom Kelly, Past President, King County Bar Association

Contract City Representative

Depending on topic/issue other impacted agencies would be polled/interviewed for input

For Cost Modeling and Implications of Operational Alternatives to Facility Space Needs:

Tricia Crozier, KCDC

Toni Rezab, Office of Management and Budget

Kathy Brown or her designee, King County Facilities

Clif Curry, Council Staff

Polly St. John, Council Staff

Beth Goldberg and/or Jill Fairlee, Office of Management and Budget

Donna Brunner, KCDC

King County Superior Court - Representative

Contract City Representative(s) – to be determined

V. Information Needs and Avoidance of “Scope Creep” for NCSC Project Team

While the budget for this project and the amount to be paid by King County are hardly negligible, the scope of work to be done by NCSC is substantial, and the timetable for project completion is relatively short. The NCSC project team will therefore require significant assistance from court and government officials at the county and city levels in King County, both in the provision of information and the maintenance of discipline in the scope of expectations.

A. Information Needs. The budget for this project will not allow the NCSC project team to engage in any labor-intensive work to generate data for this project. While members of the NCSC project team will visit the County and the Court for interviews, observations, and the conduct of focus groups or other such sessions, it will not be possible to do independent data gathering in such areas as case processing times, caseloads and workloads for the court and court-related agencies, desk audits, or costs. In any area relating to this project, it will be necessary for NCSC to conduct its analysis with the aid of information that has already been prepared or that can be prepared by staff members of the County, the Court, court-related agencies, and cities.

After the June 22 meeting of the Steering Committee for this project, the NCSC project director will hold a conference call with the members of the NCSC project team to plan project activities and discuss the information that the project team will need to complete its analysis. Included in Attachment 1 is the list of information that has been delivered NCSC from the primary staff. It is recognized that this list is not 100% and that NCSC will communicate the additional specific foreseeable information needs of the project team in writing to the primary staff representing the County, the Court and the Steering Committee. That should be followed by an effort to identify the availability of the information and who will be preparing it. To the extent that there may be any information that is identified as necessary but unavailable, it will be necessary for the NCSC project team and the primary staff representing the County, the Court and the Steering Committee to develop alternative strategies for obtaining information within the time and budget constraints that the project faces.

B. Avoidance of “Scope Creep.” Because of the finite budget for this project and the short time within which it must be completed, it will be critical for the NCSC project team and the Steering Committee to exercise discipline and remain focused on providing what is absolutely necessary for meeting the needs of the County and the Court in the project. Given the fact that there are a variety of stakeholders whose interests might be affected by the outcome of this effort, it is critical that the NCSC project team complete all of what is required without having its focus diluted or diverted to other issues. In other words, it will be critical for the NCSC project team, the County, the Court and the Steering Committee to avoid “scope creep” – any incremental addition of tasks or expectations beyond what is absolutely necessary for the NCSC project team to meet its responsibilities under the contract. To address the prospect of “scope creep,” the NCSC project director will closely monitor work being done under the project and will

call upon all of the project team members to alert him of any developments that may represent an expansion of the scope of work to be done. As soon as the NCSC project director determines that there is the prospect of additional work activities that will threaten the capacity of the NCSC project team to meet its obligations under the contract with King County, he will contact the primary staff for project management in King County and, if necessary, request consideration and resolution of the issue with the Steering Committee co-chairs.

VI. Plan for Provision of Specific NCSC Project Team Work Products

Under the contract with King County, there is a specified set of work products (the “deliverables” shown above in Table 1) that the NCSC project team must provide to the primary staff for project management in King County. Those work products are (a) a framework for assessment of court services and options; (b) a baseline caseload profile and a forecast of caseloads and workloads; (c) evaluation of court services and options, including their impact on other agencies, on staffing, and on facilities; (d) provision of final recommendations; and (e) provision of a proposed implementation plan with performance measures.

A. Framework. In Exhibit A to the contract for this project, Section C.1 provides that NCSC must create a framework for evaluation of District Court services and provision of recommendations for the future provision of such services in a fiscal climate of declining resources. This framework would guide the actual NCSC evaluation of District Court services and options (see Section V.C below in this plan) in light of (a) the Court’s mission and vision statements (as articulated on page 6 of the King County RFQ for this project), (b) whether services are mandated or not by law; (c) cost of services and anticipate revenue levels for the County; and (d) impact of Court operations on the operation and costs for other court-related agencies (including the King County Prosecuting Attorney’s Office, Office of Public Defense, King County Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention, Superior Court, King County Department of Judicial Administration, and King County Sheriff).

The framework must then be suitable for the assessment of alternative approaches to providing court services and for the development of recommendations about those alternatives (including recommendations on services to be retained, discontinued, or provided at a different level). Finally, the framework must allow for consideration of the cost of implementing such recommendations (judicial, staff, and facilities) and the impact of implementation on the operations and costs of other court-related agencies. (See Section V.C below.)

The NCSC project team must move quickly to develop this framework for submission to the primary staff in King County who are responsible for project management. When the NCSC project director holds a project team conference call soon after the June 22 meeting of the Steering Committee, the agenda will include (1) planning of project activities, (2) discussion of information needed from the County and the Court, and (3) discussion and refinement of a draft framework for evaluation and recommendations that the project director will have prepared. The framework would be

designed to answer the questions to be addressed in the report on evaluation of options that is to be submitted by the NCSC project team on or before October 15. (See Section C below.) It is possible that the framework may address such considerations as the following:

- Means to identify and prioritize all the District Court services to be evaluated;
- Consideration with the Court of measures of performance related to each service and each element of the Court's mission and vision statements;
- Means to determine the performance expectations of stakeholders for the District Court;
- Methods to appraise the Court's current provision of services;
- Means for addressing cost details for provision of Court services;
- Means for determining the operational and cost implications of interaction with the Court for other court-related agencies and other stakeholders;
- Means for identifying alternative approaches to the provision of court services; and
- Means to assess the operational and cost implications for both the Court and court-related agencies of implementing different alternative approaches to the provision of court services.

After the NCSC project team's internal consideration of the initial draft framework, a revised draft framework will be prepared for submission to the primary staff of King County who are responsible for the management of this project. With any refinements that may come from a consideration of that draft framework with the primary staff in the County, the Court or the Steering Committee, that framework will then guide the NCSC project team's evaluation of operations and consideration of options (see C below).

B. Baseline and Forecasted Caseload. As Table 1 suggests, the next step for the NCSC project team under the contract is to determine a "baseline" caseload for the District Court, distinguishing services mandated by law from those that are not mandated by law and showing the current level of service. NCSC would then use this baseline information to project workload factors for the District Court, taking into consideration varying types of cases, and current and alternative filing and processing practices. The work product to be completed by the NCSC project team would have two parts:

1. A baseline profile of current and alternative caseload and how it has changed over last five to ten years; and
2. Caseload (criminal, infraction, and civil) and workload forecasts for a ten-year horizon for cities, urban unincorporated, rural unincorporated and regional or other caseload, incorporating the impact of potential annexations, as well as the effects of growth or other change in population.

A brief discussion of general NCSC caseload forecasting methodology is presented in the appendix to this plan. For the purpose of this effort, the NCSC project team will require substantial data from the County and the Court. As a consequence, the

first step for the NCSC project team will be to identify and work with the County and the Court for them to provide NCSC with necessary information taking into account the data previously delivered as noted in Attachment 1. In addition to annexation information and population forecast information that would be provided by King County, the NCSC project team would need detailed District Court caseload data – preferably for the past 15 years – as well as information on how such caseload figures are customarily treated in terms of workload.

The provisions of the contract call for projections of both caseload and workload. Since any new and rigorous effort at weighted workload measurement in the King County District Court would by itself consume a substantial portion of the budget for this project, it will be incumbent on the NCSC project team to rely on the best information currently available for determining what the Court’s caseload figures mean in terms of workload.

Mr. Christopher Ryan from the NCSC project team will take the lead in the completion of the baseline and project caseload assessment. After he has communicated with the primary staff by telephone or electronic mail, he will visit King County if necessary to obtain the information that is necessary for this assessment. Working with Dr. Cheesman, he will then prepare an interim project report shown baseline and projected caseloads, for submission to the primary staff on or before July 31, 2004. The NCSC project team’s evaluation of options (see below) will build on and link back to the results of the caseload baseline and forecasting effort.

C. Evaluation of Options. This is the heart of the project, and it would be guided by the framework described above in Section A. In keeping with the District Court’s mission and vision (including access to justice), the contract calls for the NCSC project team to create different options for analysis. This effort is to include a cost, operating, and facilities model that would allow the County and the Court to track and quantify key variables, so that the County can identify the impacts of alternative approaches and combination of approaches. The contract indicates that the model should include such factors as the following (not listed in priority order):

- Mandated versus non-mandated services;
- Cost and operational impacts on other criminal justice system components (King County Prosecuting Attorney’s Office, Office of Public Defense, King County Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention, Superior Court, and King County Department of Judicial Administration, and King County Sheriff);
- Space needs (including additions, improvements, reductions, new space);
- Centralized versus decentralized court services and location of court services;
- Judges and Commissioners;
- Clerical, probation, administration and other staff needs;
- Operational efficiencies;
- Cost effectiveness;
- Change in caseload (including annexations);
- Impacts of “best practice” recommendations;

- Forecast for future funding from the King County general fund – based on available information from the King County Office of Management and Budget; and
- Forecast for other sources of funding, including fines, forfeitures, fees, grants, and other district court operating revenues.

Beginning in July or August, the NCSC project team would undertake a substantial effort in King County to conduct interviews, hold group sessions with stakeholders, and otherwise gather information, in keeping with the framework described in Section A above, to provide a basis for the preparation of a report on options for the District Court. Messrs. Tobin and Yeh, along with Mr. Aikman, Ms. Wentland, Mr. Lachman, and Ms. Laing, would probably make a joint initial visit together, after which Aikman, Lachman and Laing would carry out the balance of the on-site work in light of both the framework and what the project team had learned from the joint initial visit.

In August and September, the NCSC project team would begin analysis and preparation of a report to be submitted on or before October 15. Working with Mr. Steelman (as well as with Aikman, Lachman, Laing and Wentland), Messrs. Tobin, Yeh and Ryan would prepare a second interim report. This would be the key report in the project, and it would address such issues as the following:

- What are mandated versus non-mandated District Court services? What level of service is required for District Court services (constitutional, statute, state court rule, county policy)? What would be the cost or other impact, if any, for government and citizens if specific non-mandated services were eliminated? What are the operational and potential capital needs of mandated versus non-mandated services?
- Current practice and alternatives to current practice to deliver services in alignment with the District Court mission and vision, including at least the following areas:
 - Location of court operations;
 - The advantages and disadvantages, as well as the costs and benefits, of County contracts with municipalities for the provision of District Court services;
 - The advantages and disadvantages, as well as the costs and benefits, in the use of elected judges versus court commissioners;
 - The advantages and disadvantages, as well as the costs and benefits, in the use of traffic referees and such alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms as mediation;
 - The advantages and disadvantages, as well as the costs and benefits, of alternatives relating to hours of court operations;
 - The advantages and disadvantages, as well as the costs and benefits, of such technology options for service delivery as electronic mail, internet, electronic court records;

- In comparison to the current organizational pattern, the advantages and disadvantages, as well as the costs and benefits, of having a unified court administrative structure between Superior Court and District Court; and
- Best practices from other jurisdictions and alternatives to current practice, recognizing the span of judicial control in King County District Court compared with other jurisdictions.
- Impact of possible changes on court staffing:
 - How estimated judgeship needs are likely to change under different workload assumptions (e.g., mandated versus non-mandated type of caseload, number of cases, annexations, contracting with municipalities, problem solving courts, and probation);
 - Estimated staff needs for District Court (clerical, probation, administrative and other staff), and how these estimates are likely to change under different workload assumptions (e.g., mandated versus non-mandated, type of caseload, number of cases, annexations, contracting with municipalities, problem solving courts, probation).
- Considerations bearing on the optimum facility location for court services, including such issues as the following:
 - The impact on mandated and non-mandated services;
 - The impact on contracting cities;
 - Decentralized court services versus centralized court services;
 - Space needs for storage, courtroom staff, non-courtroom staff, jury rooms, security, client counters, and parking*;
 - Existing technology and future technology needs;
 - Potential capital improvements and estimated timeline needs;
 - Potential facility sharing arrangements or multi-use options (e.g., sharing with cities, other King County agencies, system providers).

D. Final Recommendations. Based on the interim report submitted on or before October 15, as affected by consideration of that report by the County, the Court, and the Steering Committee, the NCSC project team would then prepare its final recommendations for submission by November 15. This effort would be undertaken by the core project team members – Messrs. Tobin, Yeh, and Ryan – in collaboration with Mr. Steelman. The final recommendations would parallel key areas addressed in the report on the evaluation of options:

- What should be done about mandated versus non-mandated District Court services? What non-mandated services, if any, should be continued because their elimination would cause unacceptable additional systemic costs for government and citizens?

* The NCSC project team recognizes that change in space planning is governed through the adoption of the County Space Plan and that there are concurrent efforts to address courthouse space needs through the “Near Term Courthouse Space Planning Team” led by the Department of Facilities Management.

- Suggestions on the delivery of services in alignment with the District Court mission and vision, including at least the following areas:
 - Location of court operations;
 - County contracts with municipalities for the provision of District Court services;
 - The use of elected judges versus court commissioners;
 - The use of traffic referees and such alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms as mediation;
 - The hours of court operations;
 - Such technology options for service delivery as electronic mail, internet, electronic court records;
 - Having a unified court administrative structure between Superior Court and District Court; and
 - The best practices from other jurisdictions and alternatives to current practice that are most suitable for adoption by the King County District Court.
- The optimum facility location for court services, in view of such issues as the following:
 - The impact on mandated and non-mandated services;
 - Decentralized court services versus centralized court services;
 - Space needs for storage, courtroom staff, non-courtroom staff, jury rooms, security, client counters, and parking;*
 - Existing technology and future technology needs.
 - Potential capital improvements and estimated timeline needs.
 - Potential facility sharing arrangements or multi-use options (e.g., sharing with cities, other King County agencies, system providers).

E. Implementation Plan. The final requirement in the contract for the NCSC project team is to develop a proposed implementation plan including the establishment of court performance measures to support an on-going evaluation of the services provided by the District Court. The implementation plan would include short term, intermediate term, and long-term implementation goals. It would be critically important for the plan to emphasize steps that are within the power of King County government to implement, as opposed to those that would require action by the State of Washington or an external agency to be implemented.

The proposed implementation plan would take into consideration the manner in which the final recommendations by the NCSC project team will have been received by the County, the Court and the Steering Committee. It would be prepared by the core NCSC project team members working with the project director, and it would be presented in person by the NCSC project director at the December 2004 or January 2005 meeting of the Steering Committee.

* The NCSC project team recognizes that change in space planning is governed through the adoption of the County Space Plan and that there are concurrent efforts to address courthouse space needs through the “Near Term Courthouse Space Planning Team” led by the Department of Facilities Management.

VII. Conclusion

The NCSC project team members are excited to work with the County, the Court and the Steering Committee in this effort. Because of its complexity, NCSC will rely on the candor and commitment of all the participants in this project to help assure its successful completion. Experience suggests that unanticipated developments may call for refinement and revision of the approach outlined here, and NCSC will work closely with the primary staff in King County to help assure that timely progress toward desired outcomes is maintained.

APPENDIX.

OVERVIEW OF CASELOAD FORECASTING

NCSC generally produces two types of forecasts for each type of case, one based on trend extrapolation and the other based on the relationship between the type of case and the population of the jurisdiction under examination. Trend extrapolation examines historical patterns of growth and decline for each case type, develops a statistical model based on this historical pattern and extrapolates it into the future. It is a uni-variate technique since the analysis is based on only one variable, the variable (in this case the number of filings for a particular type of case) being forecasted. Typically one form or another of exponential smoothing or a moving average is used to produce the trend extrapolation forecasts. Both exponential smoothing and moving averages place more weight on recent observations than on older observations. Both NCSC's experience and the research literature on forecasting support the propositions (a) that placing greater weight on more recent observations results in more accurate forecasts, and (b) that these less complex methods outperform the more complex methods in the short term.

Forecasts are also made using the county population to predict the number of filings of each type of case. Forecasts of this type capitalize on the relationship between the size of the population and the number of filings. Both forecasts are evaluated using appropriate statistical tests and the models that provide the best fits to historical data are selected. The forecasts produced by the best trend extrapolation and the best population-based models are averaged to produce a "best-guess" forecast. While there are many ways (some quite sophisticated) to combine different types of forecasts, simple averaging has been shown to produce forecasts that are at least as accurate as any other combination technique.

Forecasts combined from techniques that have quite different bases (in this case, trend extrapolation and population based) tend to compensate for weaknesses in the individual forecast types and enhance their strengths. Trend based forecasts tend to be more sensitive to changes in filing trends that are not always related to population such as policy changes (e.g., decriminalization of certain offenses) and changes in crime rates. Population-based forecasts are more sensitive to changing demographic trends (especially age-related) than trend forecasts. Further, trend-based forecasts tend to be more accurate in the short-run, while regression-based techniques tend to be more accurate in the long run.

Attachment 1
List of Information Items Delivered to NCSC in early June for Background work

In Alphabetical Order by Major Category:

Budget

- May 12 Council Budget Forum Presentation
- OMB Budget Presentation
- District Court 2002 to 2004 Summary Budget
- District Court 2002 to 2004 Detail Information Budget

Caseload

- Judicial Needs AOC Methodology
- Link to AOC website
- Download of 10 years of caseload data by type from the AOC
- Overview of Courts from the AOC

City Contracts

- 2002 to 2004 Contract
- 2005 to 2006 Contract

Facilities

- General District Court facilities assessment done in 2001
- 2003 County Space Plan

King County Global Reports

- King County Governance Commission Report
- Budget Advisory Task Force Final Report

Operations

- Clerical Study 1998
- 2003 and 2004 (Through May) Executive Committee Minutes
- Evaluations
 - Dispute Resolution Center
 - Relicensing Program
- GAO Policies and Procedures
- Payroll and Purchasing Policies
- Judge Pro Tempore Policies – training manual
- Service Contracts
 - Dispute resolution
 - Labor
 - Ancillary contracts
- Location of additional information on the web
 - Local court rules
 - Revised Code of Washington

- Hours of Operations
- Organizational Chart 2004
- Positions and Salaries

Overview of King County District Court from the RFQ

Population

Forecasted Population for King County for 10 years by County Demographer